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ABSTRACT

For thousands of years, the people of the Hupa tribe have lived in villages beside the Trinity River in a beautiful rich valley in northwestern California. Hupa culture and traditions are extensive, elaborate, and intimately bound up with their homeland. The first white men entered the valley in 1828, although coastal traders' goods had filtered inland for 50 years previously. By 1850, the presence of thousands of gold seekers in the area and resulting incidents of violence led the U. S. Congress to send a commissioner to northern California. He negotiated a treaty with area tribes, but Congress rejected it. Fifteen bloody years followed, during which the Hupa employed passive resistance, clever strategy, and open warfare to maintain their place in the valley. In 1864, a new treaty set aside all of the valley as a reservation. The Hupa then endured 65 years of government attempts to "civilize and Christianize" them and destroy their ancient culture. By 1930, it had become clear that governmental policies had brought disaster to many of the nation's native peoples. Sweeping policy revisions initiated the practice of consultation with the tribal council, drastically changed Indian education, and led to economic development in the valley. The book contains many old photographs and maps, extensive notes on each chapter, and source information. Appendices include the treaties of 1851 and 1864, proclamations and executive orders from 1864 to 1912, list of Indian agents from 1864 to 1930, and a chronology of reservation surveys and allotment attempts from 1875 to 1935. (SV)

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